



# DO COMPREHENSIVE AND SELECTIVE CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK REALLY WORK FOR L2 WRITING ACCURACY? AN OVERVIEW FROM INDONESIAN CONTEXT

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## Abstract

**Purpose of the study:** Investigating the effect of corrective feedback on Indonesian students' writing accuracy was the aim of this present study.

**Methodology:** The methods used were a true experiment with a pretest-treatment-posttest-delayed posttest design was employed to address the research questions and a two-way ANOVA to examine.

**Main Findings:** The data collected was the grammatical accuracy scores from the three groups (comprehensive corrective feedback/CCF, selective corrective feedback/SCF, and non-grammatical feedback/NGF).

**Applications of this study:** Indonesian EFL students'.

**Novelty/Originality of this study:** EFL writing teacher is suggested to accommodate the integrated teaching of grammatical features in a communicative context.

**Keywords:** *Corrective Feedback, L2 Writing, Writing Accuracy, Comprehensive Corrective Feedback (CCF), Selective Corrective Feedback (SCF), Non-grammatical Feedback (NGF).*

## INTRODUCTION

Composing linguistically accurate paragraphs was the most “challenging” factor of complex writing process encountered by university students majoring in English. In the Indonesian EFL context, the majority of the students' problems including subject and verb agreements, pronouns, plural and singular nouns or countable and uncountable nouns, the use of the verb, preposition, etc., are classified into local grammatical errors. [Mukminatien \(1999\)](#) states that the problems of three different English Education student groups on writing performance were demonstrated in the forms of grammatical incompetence as shown by the errors they made in composing. It was far from what was expected from the students who should be able to use linguistically well-formed sentences as they have had previously been taught about grammar extensively in the first few semesters. However, the problems persisted when they performed written tasks.

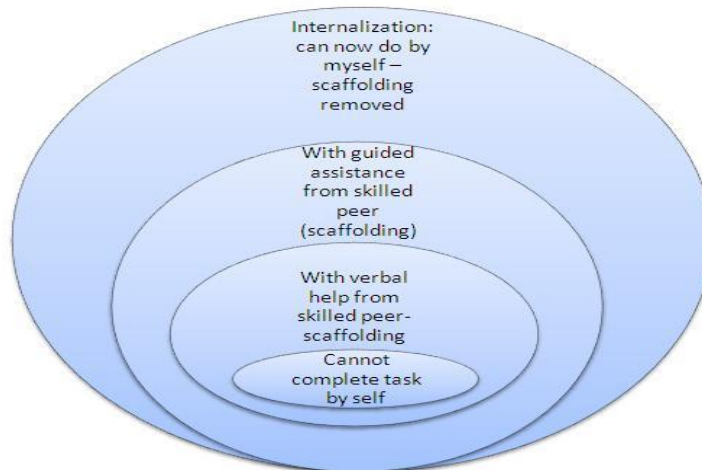
Learners' errors are considered as evidence of the system of the language that she/he is using or has learned at a particular point in the course as it is viewed from the perspective of linguists ([Corder, 1967](#); [Dulay & Burt, 1974](#); [Bartholomae, 1980](#)). In this perspective, errors are considered as a mark showing that a learner is exploring the new system (whether consciously or unconsciously) rather than just experiencing “interference” from her/his mother tongue. From a different perspective of language learning, the errors made by a learner can be attributed to interlingual and intralingual factors ([Ellis, 1994](#)). The former deals with the negative transfer or interference from the first language (L1) or between language factors, while the latter occurs within the language and is thus not associated with cross-linguistic influence.

In different related theories on Second Language Acquisition (SLA), learners' errors should get be corrected as soon as they made the errors to avoid the formation or pattern of lousy habit ([Spada & Lightbown, 2008](#)) so it could be fossilized on students' thought. Providing feedback is then required to save learners from fossilized errors. Moreover, it will be worse than fossilization can be experienced by the learners when the exposure to the second language does not include instructions or sort of feedback ([Lightbown & Spada, 2011](#)). Therefore, instruction and feedback, as they claim, would help students to recognize differences between their interlanguage and the target language. It is noticed as language inputs which can improve learners' L2 language, especially in writing. It is then becoming the necessary stimuli and feedback which learners respond to and imitate as proposed by the view of behaviorist learning theories.

According to another perspective of psycholinguistics and cognitive second language acquisition (SLA) frameworks ([Schmidt, 1990](#); [VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993](#); [Robinson, 2003](#)), corrective feedback (CF) as a general form of feedback can stimulate students to EFL/English as a second language (ESL) learning ([Bitchener & Knoch, 2010](#)). Through corrective feedback, the teacher can provide a key element to provide learners with plentiful comprehensible inputs ([Krashen, 1982](#)). Students are expected to comprehend the available input by inferring its meaning based on the linguistic information that is attached in the communicative context. Some attention to linguistic forms, as the corrective feedback normally be provided especially in EFL/ESL writing, is necessary for students to be able to progress towards well-form in their L2 ([Long & Robinson, 1998](#); [Long, 2000](#); [Norris & Ortega, 2000](#); [Skehan & Foster, 2001](#); [Ellis, 2005](#)).

The students' writing's feedback provision is based on two following theories and hypotheses: cognitive theory and noticing hypothesis; and social constructivist theory. [Schmidt \(1990\)](#) states for cognitive theory and hypothesis awareness to be in the realm of learners' ability, they have to be able to notice it first. However, seeing on its own does not give benefit result in students' acquisition. Students, in this case, have to consciously pay attention to or notice input for input to become intake for their L2 learning. Thus, the corrective feedback will be useless and give zero effect without students' attention to the given feedback on their composition.

Another theory supporting feedback provision is the socio-cultural theory (SCT) of learning, as proposed by Vygotsky. Learning, according to this theory, is mediated by and is evident in social interaction. The theory holds a belief that the students can develop their academic work to reach a level of actual development by independently solving problems and another level of potential development under adult guidance or expert scaffolding and in collaboration with more capable peers known as "zone of proximal development (ZPD)" ([Vygotsky, 1978](#)).



**Figure 1:** Model of Zone Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978)

## LITERATURE REVIEW

State of the Art on the literature of reducing composition errors in writing has been fixed. [Lalande \(1982\)](#) concludes that the most effective strategy to reduce errors that the students have committed in their composition is to conduct 'comprehensive error correction'. Comprehensive in this context means correcting any linguistic error (i.e. syntactic errors, morphological errors) found in students' work. Comprehensive error correction seems to be effective as it raises students' recognition of the mistakes they have produced and prevents students from inculcating faulty linguistic structures in their interlanguage system. If teachers are correcting students' errors in their compositions, they may lead to developing students' editing and revision skills, which in turn improving students' linguistic accuracy ([Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005](#)).

As opposed to comprehensive error correction, [Sheen \(2007\)](#) contends that focused corrective feedback (focusing on one or more specific linguistic features such as article, preposition, etc.) is more fruitful in refining students' grammatical precision in writing. As typically discerned in students' writing, the grammatical errors are proportionately mixed. The benefits of focused corrective feedback, as Sheen argues, are that they can pinpoint problem areas better and thus minimize students' potential confusion and cognitive overload. The findings of the study showed that written corrective feedback targeting a single linguistic feature improved learners' accuracy, primarily when metalinguistic feedback (i.e. provide a linguistic clue of the error or a brief grammatical explanation) was provided, and the learners had high language analytic ability.

Meanwhile, the types of strategies in providing written corrective feedback, therefore, require further research as to whether the error correction should be comprehensive (any grammatical error the students have made) or selective (a specific type of grammatical errors). Previous studies show conflicting findings in these two strategies on the overall accuracy of students' composition. Some researchers ([Beuningen, 2011](#); [Beuningen et al. 2012](#); [Lalande, 1982](#)) believe that comprehensive corrective feedback is effective in reducing students' linguistic errors in composition, while some others ([Sheen, 2007](#); [Bitchener & Knoch, 2008](#); [Sheen, Wright & Moldawa, 2009](#)) argue that selective corrective feedback lends to precision in grammar usage in L2 writing better than comprehensive corrective feedback does. The present study provided an answer to the existing conflicting findings and presented a clear result that is relevant to the Indonesian EFL student context.

Furthermore, based on the related literature concerning corrective feedback provision on students' writing, the effectiveness is still inconclusive. Although some recent studies ([Sheen, 2007](#); [Bitchener, 2008](#); [Bitchener & Knoch, 2010](#); [Beuningen, 2012](#)) show that targeted corrective feedback can be effective in reducing students' grammatical error in composition, some other studies ([Truscott, 1996; 1999; 2007](#); [Truscott & Hsu, 2008](#)) are in doubt about its usefulness. Those who have opposing views on the effectiveness of corrective feedback argue that students' accuracy can be damaged by the error correction provided by the teacher. The students who received error correction are said to shorten and simplify their writing. The accuracy, as they believe, is probably improved through extensive experience with the target language.

In similar, [Truscott \(1996\)](#) pointed that teacher cannot notice what developmental sequence the learner is at and know how to address the errors if it is only through error correction because it does not consider a learner's developmental sequence of acquisition in which this is problematic and unrealistic. In response to this statement, [Lightbown & Spada \(2011\)](#) adds the opinions that developmental stages are not like "closed rooms" in which the learners do not leave one behind when they enter another. It implies that it cannot be expected to find behaviors from only one stage" in examining a language sample from a learner. The opinions contend that learners can have bursts of progress before reaching a plateau for a while before something stimulates further growth. Therefore, stimuli can be in the form of feedback, which encourages further progress. It should be included in instructions of the second language to help learners recognize the divergence between their interlanguage and the target language. With the purpose to test these arguments on the usefulness or effectiveness of corrective feedback in writing, the present study compared the corrective feedback groups: comprehensive corrective feedback (CCF), selective corrective feedback (SCF) and non-grammatical feedback (NGF) group.

### Corrective Feedback

Scholars mainly describe feedback as any positive or negative response made about students' performance on specific tasks either from the teacher or other persons. Positive feedback verifies that a learner's response to activity is correct. Theoretically, positive feedback is regarded as crucial since feedback provides effective support and fosters a motivation to continue learning. However, in SLA, [Ellis \(2005\)](#) argues that it has only a little attention in discourse-analytical studies of classroom interaction as it demonstrated that the teacher's positive feedback is commonly ambiguous for learners (e.g., "good" or "yes"). The feedback does not give any alarm to show that the learner is correct. Negative feedback, conversely, signals that the learner's utterance lacks truthfulness or is linguistically unusual. In the last decades, the corrective feedback has been much discussed in SLA discussions among the researchers and language educators and come to the conclusion of disagreement about whether to correct errors, what errors to correct, how to correct mistakes, and when to correct those errors.

In the theories of second language acquisition, it has been contended that errors made by the learners are considered to be an integral part of language learning. Hence, errors are a sign that a learner is exploring the new system. For example, when it comes to a learner's errors, multiple scholars ([Corder, 1967](#); [Dulay & Burt, 1974](#); [Bartholomae, 1980](#)) argue that feedback provides evidence of the system of language that the learners have learned at a particular point in the course. In other words, errors are the way the learner tests her/his hypothesis about the nature of the language is learning. Hence, feedback can be applied to both children in acquiring their mother tongue and those learning a second language.

In a different discussion, corrective feedback is a sort of negative feedback given to the learners as responses to learners' sentences which contains a linguistic error. [Ellis \(2005\)](#) says that the responses were given to renovate or repair and can comprise of an indication that an error has been committed, or it is a provision of the correct target language form and meta-linguistic information about the nature of the error or any combination of them. In conclusion, corrective feedback episodes, as explained, can be a trigger, feedback move, and (optionally) uptake. It can be simple, which involves only one correction strategy, or complex, which involves several corrective moves and also further triggering moves.

### Strategies of Written Corrective Feedback

Scholars have verified that the written corrective feedback takes multiple forms in which degrees of success may vary. For teachers, providing corrective feedback on students' written errors has a wide variety of choices that are the potential to be employed. Since the options are diverse, this method exhibits teacher's and researchers' creativity and inquisitiveness in striving to realize the most effective means to give feedback to bring about the greatest change. Nevertheless, the most consistent finding ([Bitchener, 2008](#); [Ellis 2005](#); [Beuningen, 2012](#)) has been that using corrective feedback on students' writing eclipsed using no feedback at decreasing chances for future errors.

Referring to [Ellis \(2005\)](#), there are six major categories as the typology of written corrective feedback. The terminology and classification this paper discussed, which are related to the feedback types, are based on them, as shown in Table 2.1.

**Table 1:** Categories of Written Corrective Feedback (adopted from [Ellis \(2005\)](#))

Type of corrective feedback	Description
Direct corrective feedback	This direct correction of an error occurs when the correct form is given in place of an incorrect form
Indirect corrective feedback	Occurs when an error is indicated, but the correct form is not given. Two types of it are:
<i>a) Indicating only</i>	a) Indicating only when an error is noted, such as in the margin, but the exact location is not provided.
<i>b) Indicating the specific location</i>	b) Indicating the specific location when the error is underlined or given a specific reference.
Metalinguistic feedback	Occurs when the writer is given a linguistic clue of the error. This can take two forms:

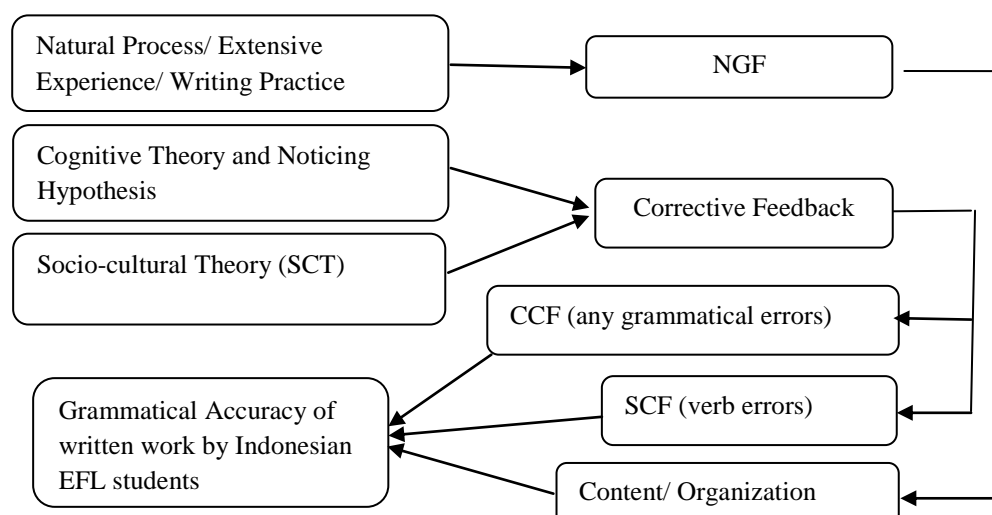
	a) <i>Error codes</i>	a) The use of abbreviations or error codes.
	b) <i>Brief grammatical description</i>	b) A brief grammatical explanation is ordinarily given at the bottom of the text or on an attached form.
The focus of the feedback		This can take in a variety of forms the way it is given, depending on the level of focus.
	a) <i>Focused</i>	a) Focused feedback occurs when a limited number of language features are concentrated on.
	b) <i>Unfocused</i>	b) Unfocused feedback occurs when many or all language features are addressed in the feedback.
Electronic feedback		Occurs via computer-mediated methods when a hyperlink is used to indicate an error has occurred.
Reformulation		Occurs when a first language user rewrites or reformulates the targeted second language student's text.

### Selective and Comprehensive Corrective Feedback

Selective and comprehensive corrective feedbacks (SCF and CCF) are the other terms commonly used to refer to focused and unfocused corrective feedback. Both deal with the extent to which the language features in students' composition are targeted. While SCF strategies take the form of concentrating on one specific linguistic feature, regardless of the other errors that may occur in writing, CCF addresses all of the errors in the student's text. As [Sheen \(2007\)](#) employed a focused strategy successfully to improve the grammatical accuracy of students' writing by using written corrective feedback in trying to influence the correct use of definite and indefinite articles. The benefits of focused strategies, as she argues, are that they can better pinpoint problem areas, and thus reduce the potential confusion and cognitive overload of the students. She puts forward her argument as follows:

"Written corrective feedback is complex. It addresses different aspects of writing— content, organization, rhetoric, and mechanics, as well as linguistic accuracy. The question arises, however, whether written corrective feedback should deal with all these aspects at the same time or address different aspects selectively when correcting different pieces of writing. L2 learners have limited processing capacity and asking them to attend corrections that address a range of issues at the same time may tax their ability to process the feedback. One reason that previous studies of written corrective feedback have failed to demonstrate any effect on students' accuracy in subsequent writing may simply be that the linguistic feedback was not sufficiently focused and intensive." ([Sheen, 2007](#))

Among the variety of features, unfocused corrective feedback appears to become the norm for research and practice in written corrective feedback instructions. The vast majority of teachers (and also researchers) might have a difficult time ignoring large segments of problematic areas by concentrating only on one specific feature, over a significant period. Focusing on limited features in the writing classroom may practically be difficult due to the students' expectations. And yet, as Sheen's study maintains, there may be some important lessons to be learned from the focused-unfocused dichotomy in written corrective feedback and from further investigation into the impacts each one has on the improvement of writing.



**Figure 2:** Theoretical Framework of the Present Study



## METHOD

True experimental design with a pretest-treatment-posttest-delayed posttest design was employed to answer the research questions. This study used three experimental groups which randomly assigned and labeled as CCF group (N=15), SCF group (N=15), and NGF group (N=18). The treatment, the independent variable, was two different types of written corrective feedback (comprehensive and selective correction) and non-grammatical feedback, comments on aspects other than a grammatical error (e.g. content, organization, etc.). The grammatical target for comprehensive corrective feedback (CCF) group was the use of any grammatical features in writing whereas the target of selective corrective feedback (SCF) group was the use of verb (verb tense, verb form, subject-verb agreement). The target for non-grammatical feedback (NGF) group, as a comparison group, was to inform whether grammatical accuracy was affected by NGF treatment. The data for the present study was the grammatical accuracy scores the three groups obtained in the pretest, posttest, and delayed posttest.

In a comprehensive corrective feedback (CCF) group, the raters corrected any grammatical errors. To avoid swamping the learners with corrections, the errors with the same grammatical forms were corrected for twice. For instance, a student's sentence contained the missing article "a". The teacher corrected this error type once only. If the students were committed the same error (missing article "a") in the following sentences, the teacher would not correct this error type anymore. Differently, in the SCF group, the raters corrected the verb errors only (verb tense, verb form, subject-verb agreement). And the last group of NGF, the raters provided comments on either content or organization. Nevertheless, grammatical errors appeared in this group's writing was also calculated to obtain grammatical accuracy score as applied in both CCF and SCF group.

## DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

### The Students' Scores on Grammatical Accuracy Before and After Receiving the Corrective Feedback

The study shows the students' pretest scores performed similar performance (7.46 for CCF group, 7.51 for SCF group, and 7.49 for NGF group). However, the scores were different in terms of performance after giving the teacher's feedback treatment revealed from posttest 1 scores (8.53 for CCF group, 7.64 for SCF group, and 7.79 for NGF group) and posttest 2 scores (7.78 for CCF group, 7.56 for SCF group, and 7.88 for NGF group). The results of data analysis using two-way ANOVA shows that the effect of giving three different feedback strategies (CCF, SCF, and NGF) and the scores on grammatical accuracy at three times points (pretest, posttest 1, and posttest 2) was different at  $F(3.171, 55.359) = 2.898, p < .05$ . From the posttest one results of the analysis, there was a significant difference between-group differences,  $F(2, 42) = 3.242, p < .05$ . Tukey HSD follow-up pair-wise comparison test was performed to examine if differences in the mean scores of grammatical accuracy among each of the groups existed in the posttest 1. The analysis revealed that students' performance in the CCF group was better than the SCF group ( $p = .049$ ). Surprisingly, the results of the analysis showed that there was no significant difference between the students' performance in the CCF group and NGF group ( $p = .129$ ). In other words, both the comparison of the SCF group and the NGF group did not reach statistical significance ( $p = .911$ ) respectively.

### Students' Verb Accuracy Scores Before and After Receiving the Corrective Feedback

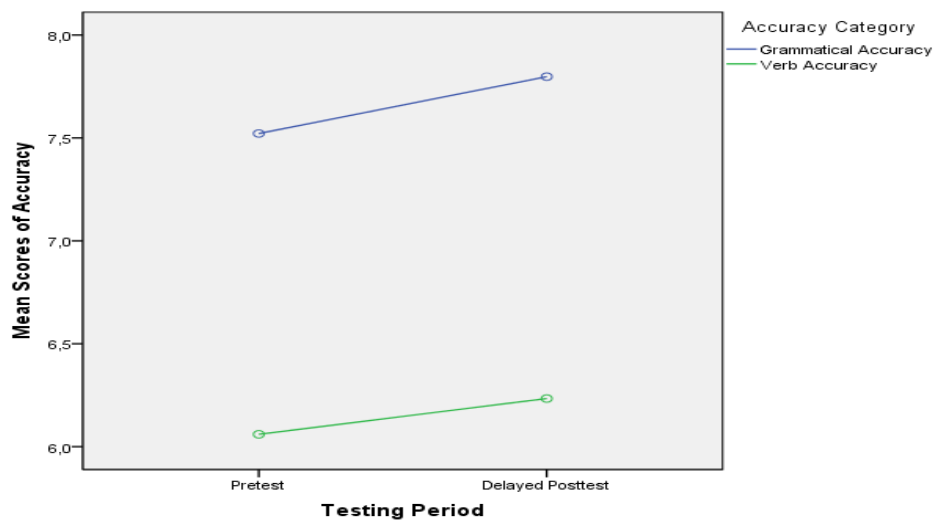
The mean scores of the CCF and SCF groups' performance in the pretest were equally similar at the point of 6.11 and 6.35. However, there were different after applying the feedback treatment in posttest 1 and posttest 2. The groups' performance was 8.53 (CCF), 7.64 (SCF), 7.79 (NGF), after the received feedback treatment. The results of data analysis comparing the effect of the two strategies show that there was no significant interaction both between and within subjects ( $F = 1, 21 = .183, p > .05$  for the treatment with  $F(2, 43) = .313, p > .05$  for the time, and  $F(2, 43) = .859, p > .05$  for the time x treatment. Since the findings revealed no significant difference in group performance, no further analysis was necessary.

### Students' Improvement on Accuracy Resulted from CCF and SCF in Delayed Posttest

The result of paired samples  $t$ -test indicated that there were no significant differences in the grammatical accuracy scores between the pretest ( $M = 7.49, SD = .778$ ) and the delayed posttest ( $M = 7.78, SD = 1.039$ ),  $t(12) = -.989, p = .338, d = -0.271$  for CCF group. Cohen (1992) classifies the  $d$  value into three effect levels: small effect = 0.20 to 0.50, medium effect = 0.50 to 0.80, and large effect = 0.80 and higher. Based on the results, the  $d$  value of the paired-sample  $t$ -test on the CCF group's grammatical accuracy scores was -0.283. Therefore, it can be inferred that the effect of CCF treatment affecting students' grammatical accuracy in writing was categorized into small effect (see Figure 3).

The overall findings of the study revealed that the students in the three groups had improved scores on the accuracy of the use of grammatical features in writing in posttest 1, except for the SCF group. The findings of this study were by previous research on the efficacy of CCF in improving the grammatical accuracy of students' writing (Lalande, 1982; Beuningen, 2011; Beuningen et al., 2012). This paper suggests that the group received CCF wrote a new piece of writing more accurately than did other groups with different feedback treatment. Although the NGF group improved the accuracy in the use of grammatical features in writing, it was only slightly and not significant. Therefore, it cannot be interpreted as an accuracy improvement as this might be attributed to an irrelevant, extraneous variable instead of attributed to feedback treatment. This case was in line with various researchers' (Long 1991; 1996; 2000; Long & Robinson, 1998; Norris &

[Ortega, 2000](#); [Doughty, 2003](#); [Spada & Lightbown, 2008](#); [Ellis, 2015](#)) arguments that learners' accuracy development is likely to be slower, more complicated, and less successful without the involvement of focus on form, as corrective feedback on writing.



**Figure 3:** CCF Group's Accuracy Scores of Pretest and Delayed Posttest

Different results on the improvement of the two groups' writing mentioned above, the SCF group's writing showed a slight decrease in grammatical accuracy in posttest 1. This finding again supports [Lalande's \(1982\)](#) claim that unless all errors are identified, such as focusing only on accurate verb usage, the grammatical errors may remain unchanged. Furthermore, the cognitive theory and noticing hypothesis validate this view. [Schmidt \(1990\)](#) asserts that for something to be learned, it has to be noticed first. Then, with students' conscious attention to input, it will become an intake for L2 learning. Corrective feedback on any grammatical errors in writing, in this case, functions as input for students to learn grammatical features in writing, in which without it the overall grammatical accuracy is less likely to improve.

In posttest 2, both CCF and SCF group's performance was weaker. The trend was that their grammatical accuracy scores in writing decreased considerably. When the test was delayed for four weeks, and when the feedback was no longer given to students' writing, the students' writing contained more grammatical errors. In contrast, the NGF group gradually improved the accurate use of grammatical features in their writing. However, no significant difference was found among the three groups' performance in posttest 2. This point was explained further on the effectiveness of corrective feedback, in the long run, the following part of the discussion, since this part associates with long term effects of corrective feedback.

#### *Ineffectiveness of Selective Corrective Feedback (SCF)*

The second research question asked whether there was a difference in using a specific grammatical feature, the verb accurately (verb tense, verb form, subject-verb agreement) in EFL students' writing after receiving CCF and SCF treatments. From the result of data analysis, there was an indication that the groups performed indifferently from each other over time. Although there was an increase in the accurate use of the verb by the CCF group and conversely by the SCF group, none of the changes reached their significance. Thus, it cannot be considered as an improvement nor deterioration. In other words, both CCF and SCF did not affect the correct use of verbs in EFL students' writing.

This finding opposed the previous findings ([Bitchener & Knoch, 2008](#); [Ellis, 2005](#); [Sheen et al., 2009](#)) maintain that SCF strategy helps students improve specific grammatical features in writing. The targeted grammatical feature commonly investigated in the previous research was the correct use of English articles in students' writing. This conflicting result is likely to be attributed to the different nature of targeted grammatical features so that the students proceeded them differently. [Bitchener et al. \(2005\)](#) claim that English articles are more treatable, more easily be explained and understood by grammatical rules and clarification by a teacher. Accurate use of the verb selected grammatical feature in this study, however, was more idiosyncratic than correct articles usage.

Unlike the two functional uses of the English article system ("a" for first mention and "the" for aphorism mentions), the correct use of the verb targeted in this study cover broader features as verb tense, verb form, and subject-verb agreement. From writing 1 to writing 7, students in the SCF group selectively received feedback on these areas. However, the students were failed to apply the given feedback in their new texts. Their performance throughout receiving feedback was unstable. Thus, corrective feedback focusing on the accurate use of the verb in writing is relatively more difficult for Indonesian EFL student writers than is focusing on the accurate use of English articles.

What are surprising results about the findings is that the CCF group better improves the accurate use of grammatical features than the SCF group directed at using the specific grammatical feature and the verb accurately? One would expect

that the SCF would result in more accurate writing, believing that SCF provides the more specific feature of English grammar to focus than CCF. [Ellis \(2005\)](#) again emphasizes a possible reason for this being related to the degree of focus. In other words, the SCF group needs more specific grammatical features (e.g. verb tense, or verb form only) to attend to for accuracy to improve in their writing.

#### *Ineffectiveness of Corrective Feedback for Long-Term Improvement on Accuracy*

The third research question asked whether both CCF and SCF produced long-term improvement on the accuracy of EFL students' writing, as measured in the delayed posttest. The result of data analysis indicated that there were no significant differences in both accuracy scores between pretest and delayed posttest for the CCF group. There was no positive effect of the feedback on the CCF group's written performance. In other words, CCF was ineffective in improving the accurate use of both grammatical features and a specific grammatical feature, the verb, of CCF group' writing in the long-term period.

Similarly, the analysis of the SCF group's writing performance indicated that there were no significant differences in the accuracy scores of both grammatical features usage and specific grammatical feature usage, the verb, in students' writing between pretest and delayed posttest. SCF, therefore, was also ineffective to help improve the accuracy of the SCF group's writing in the long run. These findings support the claim of several researchers studying the effect of corrective feedback on writing ([Krashen, 1984](#); [Semke, 1984](#); [Truscott, 1996, 1999, 2007](#); [Truscott & Hsu, 2008](#); [Pashazadeh & Marefat, 2010](#); [Khoshsima & Farid, 2012](#)) that it is ineffective in the long run. After reviewing several research studies, Truscott (2007: 270), for example, clearly concludes that "correction has a small harmful effect on students' ability to write accurately and if it has any benefits, they are very small". He strongly believes that a student writer tends to employ avoidance strategy and to improve accuracy at the expense of complexity.

Concerning the acquisition of grammatical structure in writing, Truscott and Krashen's theories appropriately explain this case. Truscott (1998) maintains that noticing a hypothesis, a theory underlying the use of corrective feedback has no theoretical and psychological basis. Providing corrective feedback, as he claims, is based on a false view of learning. Grammatical structure is acquired gradually, not suddenly discovered as the intuitive view of correction would imply ([Truscott, 1996](#)). Many EFL teachers are not well aware of the process underlying the development of the language system and adopt the simplistic view of learning as essentially the transfer of information from the teacher to students.

As distinguished between acquisition and learning, [Krashen \(1982\)](#) considers the corrective feedback as a trigger for conscious language learning. Conscious learning is said to be available to the language performer as a monitor, and it is not a sufficient condition for language acquisition to occur. The improvements in the immediate posttest, as [Krashen \(1982\)](#) and [Truscott \(1996\)](#) imply, were caused by EFL writers' metalinguistic knowledge and conscious control over their output. They, therefore, tend to disappear over time (as shown in delayed posttest) because these superficial changes do not reach EFL writers' competence.

On the whole, CCF was effective in improving the grammatical accuracy of students' writing in the short-term period. Both SCF and NGF, however, were ineffective to make students' writing more accurate grammatically. SCF was also ineffective to help improve students' exact use of a specific grammatical feature, the verb (verb tense, verb form, subject-verb agreement). Neither of the feedback treatments (CCF and SCF) produced solid effects on students' accuracy development in writing.

The findings of this study especially support the previous research ([Lalande, 1982](#); [Beuningen, 2011](#); [Beuningen et al. 2012](#)) on the effectiveness of comprehensive corrective feedback on grammatical accuracy of students' writing and oppose selective (focused) corrective feedback in helping students improve the accuracy of a specific grammatical feature (the verb). Non-grammatical feedback cannot make students' writing more accurate grammatically, unlike what was assumed by [Truscott \(1996\)](#) – that the accuracy of students' writing will automatically improve through writing practice. Focusing on form, as corrective feedback on writing, remains necessary to help students improve their accuracy in writing. This is particularly in line with [Long's \(1991\)](#) focus on form (FonF), an approach in which attention to form occurs incidentally and in the context of communication and meaningful interaction.

The teaching of writing needs to focus not only on meaning but also on the form to help students improve the accuracy so that what students intend to communicate in writing can successfully be understood by the readers. Grammar is not to be taught separately; instead, it is integrated into the communicative context. Grammar instruction will be more compatible with how learning takes place and be more effective if it caters to incidental learning through activities that encourage attention to form because what is learned is available for communicative use of language.

#### **CONCLUSION**

From several corrective feedback that have been implemented in L2 writing instructions, the study reveals that the strategy of CCF (comprehensive corrective feedback) and SCF (selective corrective feedback) were ineffective in improving the accurate use of both grammatical features (and a specific grammatical feature) and the verb in Indonesian EFL students' writing, although CCF seems to perform better than SCF ( $p = .049$ ). An interesting finding is how there is no significant difference between the implementation of CCF with the NGF (non-grammatical feedback) treatment ( $p = .129$ ), meaning that there is also no statistical significance ( $p = .911$ ) between SCF and NGF. Even though, in the context of the present

study, the selected grammatical feature as focused feedback in the SCF group was the accurate use of verb (verb tense, verb form, and subject-verb agreement). Overall, all three corrective feedback types were found to have no significant difference between one or the other in the context of L2 writing of EFL Indonesian students. This might be explained by the way EFL Indonesian teachers accommodate linguistic knowledge in teaching L2 writing properly. For EFL writing teachers, the findings of the study provide fruitful insight into the efficacy of corrective feedback in helping students to improve their writing in terms of accuracy.

## SUGGESTION

To make it more effective in the practice of classroom instruction context, an EFL writing teacher is suggested to accommodate the integrated teaching of grammatical features in L2 writing instruction.

## LIMITATION AND STUDY FORWARD

This current study is mainly focused on how teachers can use feedback to improve students' accuracy in using grammar, specifically verbs. This study has the possibility to be replicated to ascertain the usage of feedback on students' competency in other concerns of linguistics, not limited to simply written text. Another limitation of this study is that it is primarily conducted in a writing classroom setting, but future studies might be able to replicate this research in more diverse settings. Additionally, the actors involved can include students to explore peer feedback.

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